NOTE XL.

ON GALLINULA FRANKII.

BY

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The readers of my work entitled "Muséum des Pays-Bas" will recollect that I identified with the Gallinula olivacea of Meyen, inhabiting the Philippine islands, a bird collected by the late Dr. Bernstein, in the islands of Halmahera and Ternate, and which was afterwards stated to live equally in the isles of Amboina and Mysole. This bird was designated by me as belonging to a particular subdivision characterized by its very small triangular frontal plate.

Mr. Frank, the well known dealer in zoological objects at Amsterdam, a man who, during more than half a century, with an unaltered integrity, has procured for our Museum many thousands of the most valuable objects, sent to me the skin of a bird, recently collected in New-Guinea, which appears to belong to an undescribed species of Gallinula.

This bird, which I introduce under the name of Gallinula Frankii, is to be considered as a second species of the subdivision established in favor of the above mentioned Gallinula olivacea.

In size and general aspect, both birds present this sort of similarity which betrays their affinity, but no very close inspection is necessary to point out many strongly marked characteristics, which distinguish the two species from each other.

Indeed, Gallinula Frankii, has the frontal plate even smaller than Gallinula olivacea, the culmen of the upper mandible is more curved, and the bill itself, yellowish in Gallinula olivacea, is dusky brown in our new species. Legs and feet are grayish brown in the latter species, grayish yellow in the former. Of all the characteristics, however, the coloring of the plumage presents the most striking difference, the Gallinula Frankii having all parts tinged formely with a dark grayish brown, washed with olivaceous, with the exception of the belly, that of the throat the color of which is somewhat lighter, and that of the quills and tailfeathers which are of a pure dark brown. Gallinula olivacea has, on the contrary, the whole upperside of an olivaceous color, whereas the underside is of an ashy gray, passing to ferrugineous on the belly, the feathers of the tibia, and the under-tail coverts.

Principal measures of Gallinula Frankii. Wing five inches and three lines (French measure). Tail two inches and four lines. Tarse two inches. Middle toe without the nail twenty two lines. Hind toe eight lines. Naked part of tibia ten lines. Length of bill one inch. Height of bill at front five lines.

As to Gallinula olivacea, this species presents the following measures. Wing four inches and ten lines to five inches four lines. Tail twenty three to twenty six lines. Naked part of tibia ten to eleven lines. Tarse twenty two to twenty three lines. Middle toe twenty one to twenty two lines. Hind toe eight lines. Bill from front thirteen to fourteen lines. Height of bill at front five lines.

Our specimen of Gallinula Frankii was brought to Europe by one of the Dutch missionairies residing on the eastern coast of the North-West peninsula of New-Guinea, but the locality where it was killed could not be ascertained.